Journal of the Amateur Photographic Society of Madras.

Vol. 3.—No. 2. Price As. 8.

January, 1897.

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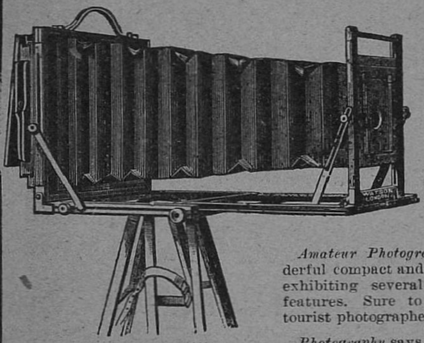

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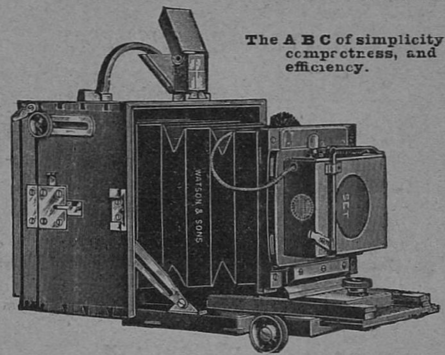

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	8 15 0	9 14 0	12 [illegible] 6

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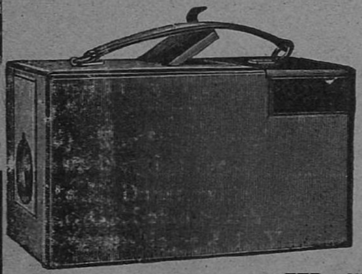

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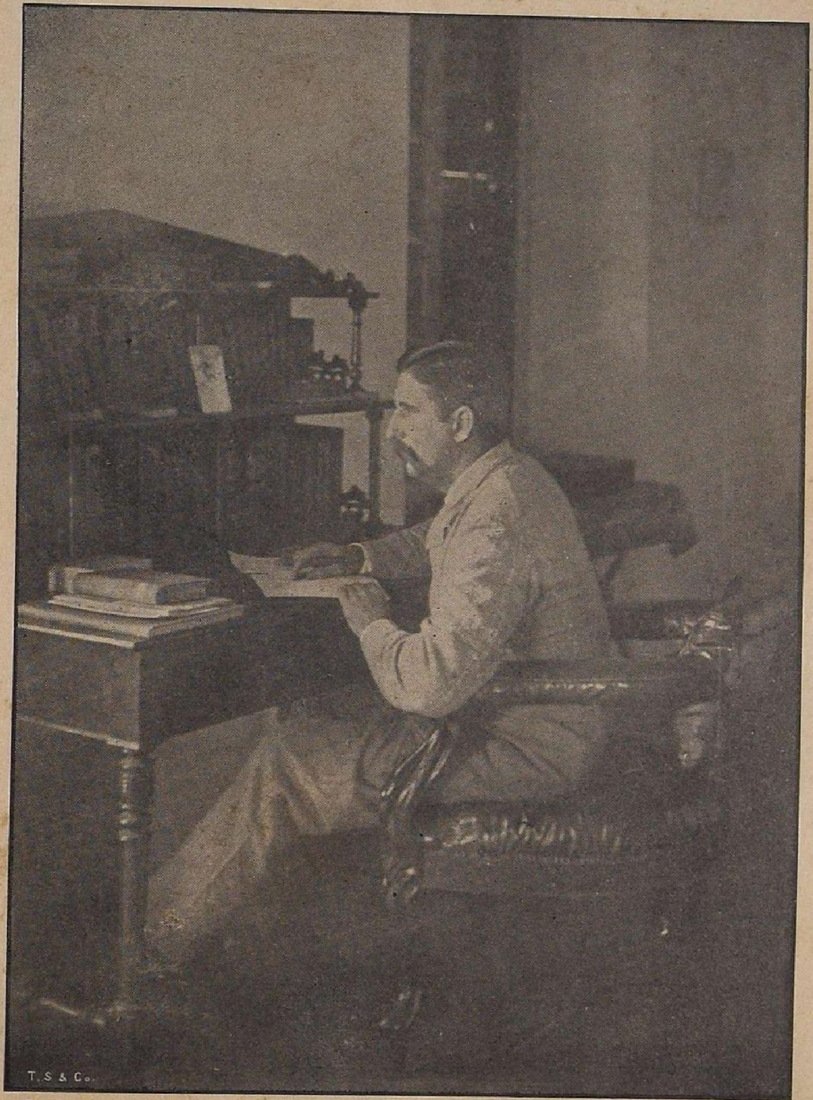

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WAITING FOR INSPIRATION.

Vol. III. No. 2. **January, 1897.**

Journal of the Amateur Photographic Society of Madras.

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CONTENTS.

	Page.
EDITORIAL NOTES—Annual Subscriptions and Other Matters—Alterations in the Rules for Competitions—Photography in the Streets of Paris—On Suppression of the Sky in Photographs.	13
ORIGINAL ARTICLE—A Review	15
MAXIMS FOR THE AMATEUR—V. In the Field	17
OUR HOME LETTER	18
PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY	19
EXTRACTS—Composition—Proofs Quickly after Exposure	21
RULES FOR COMPETITIONS—SALE AND EXCHANGE.	24

EDITORIAL NOTES.

WE are requested to remind members that their Subscriptions for the current year are now due, and that remittances should be sent as early as possible to the Honorary Treasurer, care of Messrs. Best & Co., Madras. We regret to observe that several members have allowed their subscriptions to fall considerably into arrears, some of them in spite of many reminders. In a Society whose object is one of mutual benefit, it is not right that the financial obligations to the Society should be carelessly overlooked by some members, while the rest punctually contribute their share of the working expenses. We are quite sure that all defaulters have become so quite unconsciously, and will gladly put right their accounts with the Society, without further delay.

IN a large and increasing Society such as ours, it must be inevitable that some members will get more out of the Society in return for their money than others. To a great extent the remedy lies in the hands of members themselves, who if they would but lift the little finger, would get what they ask for. There is the question box, there are the monthly meetings to which work can be submitted for criticism, there is the Journal for asking information or giving it, and even for airing grievances, there is an energetic and obliging Honorary Secretary who will be much happier if members would only trouble him oftener, there are members at head-quarters whose experience in matters photographic would with difficulty be surpassed and whose advice is at the disposal of other members for the mere asking. If therefore any

member is disposed to feel aggrieved, let him examine his own attitude first and see whether he has done what he ought to do in order to get the full benefits of his membership. The past year was one of much active work, but as in former years only a few contributed their share. In a Society which numbers so many working members, there should be many more confessions of failure. If members would only consider that more can frequently be learnt from failures than from complete successes, they would appreciate the dictum which has so often been repeated in these pages: that it is not always the best work which is wanted from members. If they would get over their shyness and show more of their failures at ordinary meetings, they would in time be able to raise the standard of exhibits at our half-yearly competitions, to which it is expected that only the best work would be sent. Too often it has happened that exhibits have been sent to the latter which would have been more profitably shown and criticised at monthly meetings. Far from wishing to discourage contributions to the half-yearly competitions, it is hoped that these remarks will induce members to prepare for them by feeling their way, so to speak, through the monthly competitions. In this way they will contribute to both sets of competitions, will help to carry on the work of the Society more continuously, and will obtain in return that good, of which they now deprive themselves through their own inactivity.

IMPORTANT alterations have been made in the Rules relating to the Society's competitions, and it is hoped that members will give their attention to these rules, and discuss their bearings, if they wish to do so, in these pages. The chief changes are: the abolition of the division into two classes ("large" and "small"), and the introduction of the mark system for monthly competitions with the institution of special awards for them. The other changes are subservient to these.

The altered rules do not apply to the competition to be held at the end of this month; but will apply to all competitions begining from the monthly competition at the meeting on the first Friday in February. From this issue forward the Rules for competitions and the subjects will be printed at the end of the Journal, and this it is hoped will obviate the difficulties which members have hitherto experienced from not having these things handy for reference.

OUR home correspondent gives a bit of information, regarding photography in the streets of Paris, which will interest our readers, some of whom may be contemplating hand-camera work there one of these days. Many unpleasant incidents have lately happened on account of the Paris official mind regarding every stranger with a camera as a spy. Mr. Matthew Surface has evidently applied to the Préfect of Police, and he has been informed that photographers are allowed to photograph in the streets provided they do not interfere with the traffic; but that a permit must be obtained in order to photograph in the parks, squares and public promenades. It is at any rate satisfactory to know that one is not liable to be shadowed and gripped by the police, because one happens to be a stranger with a camera.

THERE was a time when the sky in a photograph was left out of consideration altogether. It was not considered necessary to have any sky, or rather blank paper was accepted as a sufficient representation of blue sky, and it was even fashionable to suppress misgivings as to the faithfulness of this representation and to forgive the untruthfulness of it because it was only a photograph. Latterly, however, more artistic ideas have prevailed on the subject, and

much attention has been paid to the rendering of this important element in a pictorial photograph. So much has this been the case in latter years, that skies have been very much in evidence at exhibitions. We observe now the signs of the approach of that reaction which follows in the train of all innovations, good and bad; and in the present instance the reaction is a health-giving one. It is therefore quite refreshing to read a paper, by so well known a photographer and exhibitor as Mr. Leslie Selby, in the *Amateur Photograher*, on the suppression of the sky. He does not of course advocate a return to the white paper sky of former days; but writes forcibly to show that a lovely sunset or the fleecy midday clouds are not necessary for pictorial purposes. He shows by illustrated examples how the sky may be suppressed on suitable occasions. For example, some subjects may require merely a slight toning down of the white paper, while others with strong foreground effects may be improved by adopting a high horizon line. We wish that we could print the paper in full; but its value would be considerably discounted by omitting the accompanying illustrations which we are unfortunately not in a position to reproduce.

A REVIEW.

"INDIAN HILL LIFE" by F. St. I. Gore, B.A., Oxford.

The full title of this book as given inside the cover is—"*Lights and Shades of Hill Life in the Afghan and Hindu Highlands of the Panjab—A Contrast.*" But even this by no means indicates the essential element of this beautifully got-up volume which is of interest to us amateurs; for the author is a skilled photographer, and the pages of his very readable narrative are adorned with no less than 72 full-plate photo-etchings, not to mention 21 smaller engravings in the text, and a couple of maps.

Everyone who has tried it knows the difficulties that beset the would-be photographer among the higher hills of our great northern watershed, but Mr. Gore appears to have successfully overcome or evaded them, for the truthfulness, picturesqueness and technical finish of his pictures are beyond praise. In the preface he acknowledges his indebtedness to Signor Vittorio Sella, the well-known Alpine Photographer, for much help and advice concerning working with the camera at high altitudes, and to the following of this advice he attributes any success which he may have attained. These acknowledgments, which many might not have made, strike unconsciously the key-note of the whole book, namely, its wonderful truthfulness, for the sketch-maps provided show the exact route taken without any possibility of mistake, the photographs are not sensational views but artistically chosen bits of typical scenery, whilst the narrative, though full of life and go, is simple, truthful and unaffected. We commend the book to anyone who wishes to know something about our north and north-west frontiers, and who prefers vivacious records of the camera and unexaggerated accounts of unambitious journies to the style of sensational "traveller's tales" that are happily now becoming more and more obsolete.

The book is divided into two parts with an *Intermezzo.* The first deals with a trip into Kulu, during which he had the advantage of accompanying his brother who was in charge of a Himalayan surveying party, the line of route being from Simla through Mandi into Kulu as far as the higher reaches of the Párbati R., a *cul-de-sac* at the foot of the great Deotiba snowy peak. The second deals with a visit to the Kurr m valley; whilst the *Intermezzo* is occupied with a flying visit to the "duns" lying at the foot of the Himalaya between Simla and the Ganges at Hardwar.

The variety of scene illustrated by his pictures, and the distinctness of national type

of the races of men met with and described during these trips into what are relatively but a minute fraction of our Indian Empire, are sufficient, in the author's opinion, to demonstrate fully the fact—well-known to Anglo-Indians, but strangely overlooked by many at home—that India is not a nation, but an agglomeration of various creeds and remnants of nationalities, who have long lost all coherence among themselves, and are only kept together in the form of an artificial "concrete" by the cementing influence of the British raj.

Of the 72 plates given with the book all are good and many are of an excellence difficult to surpass. Mr. Gore has displayed a wonderful power of portrayal of Himalayan scenery and skill in getting his subjects well-lit without being too much so. Hence the modelling of the hills is about as perfect as could be wished. Plates at pages 20 and 40 illustrate this very well. Then again, he has united in many of his views broad atmospheric effects with great detail, where detail was an object to be brought out, as witness plates at pages 14, 24, 36, 86, 90, 166, &c., whilst in his views of the higher valleys of the Párbati and neighbourhood he has triumphed over that ever-recurring difficulty of obtaining in one view the distant ærial snowy peaks together with fully detailed middle distance and foreground. Doubtless a good deal of "dodging" has been done with the negatives, but there has been no drawing in of the snows—a resort that many amateurs and even professionals are often driven to, and there is no obtrusive retouching of foregrounds to offend the wary eye of the knowing critic.

Besides purely scenic views, Mr. Gore has added a good many views of incidents of camp life and groups of natives, which have a direct human interest. His bazaar scene in Peshawar opposite page 156 is a very good snap-shot, whilst that facing page 149 "from the tiger's point of view" is an example of a very well arranged group of a line of beating elephants, perfect but for the ever-moving trunks of the animals which nature destined should never remain quiet.

The author's word-painting is frequently as good and faithful to nature as his effects in black and white. Here is an extract from his first impressions when making his first march along the Simla-Narkanda road, page 8:—

"A sharply defined contrast is to be noticed in every view . . . . The midday lights over such a panorama are of course rather hard and ugly, for where the lines are wanting in a picture one looks to the colouring to relieve it. But how can one describe the morning and evening on the same ground; as the sun begins to fall, all the water-worn, herring-boned ridges on the bare mountain sides cast deep blue shadows, as if to veil their nakedness; all the flat slopes seem to start into life as the ever lengthening shadows reveal their little roughnesses: then a sudden softness comes over all the hard lines, the distance grows opal coloured through which the far off snows flash pink for a moment; while the deep valleys at our feet turn indigo blue, passing almost suddenly into black in the absence of twilight, and the stars begin to sparkle out of the frosty dark vault above."

Here is another extract describing his first view of the snows at early morning from Fagu dâk bungalow:—

"Such a morning as this is something to dream of. The dark chill of night still covered the depths below, but here at this height the rising sun was lighting up, in its delicate way, all prominent points and ridges, while the valleys still remained in deep blue, till the long rays of gold, creeping slowly down the hill-sides, picked out one by one the little villages set in their terraces of crimson amaranth. A cloudless pale-blue sky overhead, and all around a fresh keen atmosphere, so clear and pure that

the long lines of far off snows stood out white and sharp in brilliant definition; and above all the perfect stillness: not a sound could be heard but the muffled roar of the torrent far far down below echoing up out of the blue abyss."

Contrasting the Himalayan and Alpine scenery to the disadvantage of the former in point of picturesqueness he says, page 16:—"There is an almost complete lack, from an artistic point of view, of the compact and finished nature's pictures that one sees everywhere in the Alps" and here is a recommendation for such Anglo-Indians as require an inducement to take a holiday—"It is wonderfully pleasant is this continual glorious weather, this continual fresh air, this continual absence of cloud and wind. One is always hungry, one is always honestly tired at the end of the day, and if the air is not too rarified one always sleeps well."

In Part II. of the book the author describes a visit to the Khyber Pass, Ali Masjid Fort, a Khattak dance, &c., and he pays a tribute of respect for the solitary life led without a murmur by Assistant Commissioners and others in out-of-the-way places on the north-west frontier such as Hangu and Thull.

At the end of the book are some useful tables, and an appendix has been added of special interest to the amateur photographer. In the latter he gives an account of his camera and kit and many hints of great value. He took with him the following lenses:—an $8\frac{1}{2}$-inch Dalmayer Landscape, a 12-inch Ross' Rapid Symmetrical, and an 18-inch Swift Landscape. The first, a wide angle lens, he well observes is a necessity for all mountainous countries, although such lenses destroy the artistic sense of the picture. The second is a good all-round lens for ordinary work, and the third, the narrow angle 18 inch Swift, he found useful for pretty little bits and effective views of distant mountains.

His concluding advice to the amateur is to aim at uniformity of result, to give the closest attention to the smallest detail, and not to confine his attention to the prettiest pictures, but to take every landscape that is characteristic even though ugly.

The book is beautifully got up by the publisher, John Murray, London, and the plates were reproduced from the original photographs by Messrs. Brunner and Hauser of Zurich.

C. S. M.

MAXIMS FOR THE AMATEUR.

V.—In the Field.

In England when the skies are blue,
And sunlight fills the air,
We go a' courting Nature, who
Is then a damsel fair.

In haste with plates and lens we hie,
While she with light is crowned:
For oft this maid is very shy,
And oft in tears is found.

Her charms to hide, she oft insists,
In raiment closely drawn—
The drapery of cloud and mists
Or smoke from factory borne.

But India's radiant orb of fire
And arch of burnished brass
Do *not* encourage or inspire
Such energy alas!

No one of 'haste' in India thinks,
The sun's too hot to 'hie';
Whilst Nature is a forward minx
And not the least bit shy.

The brilliant liquid air displays
Her features all too plain,
And there's a something in her gaze
That gives the artist pain.

He feels abashed before her bold
And reckless lack of dress:
Oh! for some 'atmosphere' to fold
Her hopeless nakedness!

* * * * * *

'Tis easy, in a pleasure boat
On sunny reach to Thames,
To sound a loud and joyous note
Nor think of requiems;

And blessed the amateurs, who seek
Pictures by lock and weir,
By moor and ben, by crag and peak,
By lough and loch and mere.

But India has no river banks,
No gulleys, burns, or becks:
Her sandy nullahs, stagnant tanks
Æsthetic feelings vex.

And India's river-beds are not
A place to linger in,
For deadly microbes haunt the spot
Where paddy swamps begin.

* * * * * *

And yet afield I bid you go—
All Nature is not one—
And India has a goodly show
Of things beneath the sun.

But steal the moments of the dawn
Or evening, as they lend
A chastened light with shadows drawn
All crudities to blend;

Or take your way among the heights
Of frosty Himalay,
Where cold and keen the north wind bites
And tames the heat of day;

Or through some trackless forest glade,
Where soft the filtered rays
Give depth and distance, light and shade
To your enchanted gaze;

Or go where eastern custom wields
A quaint and subtle spell,
'Mong distant villages and fields
Where stranger races dwell;

Or to the city girt with walls,
The temple, or the tomb
That many a kingly deed recalls
From dead historic gloom.

And ever, when afield you ply
This charming art of ours,
Keep widely open mind and eye
For all earth's fairest flowers.

C. S. M.

OUR HOME LETTER.

In order to be in the swim just now, the correct thing to do is either to take out a patent for an acetylene gas generator, or to devise some new method of projecting animated pictures on the lantern screen. It is in these two directions that the greatest developments relating to photography are taking place at present. The dangers attached to the preparation of acetylene having given rise to a serious controversy, the risk of manipulating the gas has been considerably overrated by timid people, but there is no denying that in careless hands it offers excellent opportunities for small or even large accidents. From a careful consideration of both sides of the question, I have come to the conclusion that it is no more dangerous in the abstract, than the mixing of oxygen and hydrogen to produce the now familiar light, but being more in its infancy and the appliances connected with its production and use not having arrived at that maturity and perfection of detail which time and practical experiment only can achieve, special precautions must be observed by those who employ acetylene until its youth is passed, and we become better acquainted with it. The light, from an illuminating point of view, falls considerably below the oxy-hydrogen light, and for purposes of exhibition on a considerable scale the more recently discovered gas is decidedly inferior; but for small lantern shows, or where oxygen is not conveniently obtainable, then acetylene is very much superior in illuminating power to the best three-wick oil lamp, or even to the incandescent gas light. Its most unpleasant feature, and one which it is not easy to avoid, is the objectionable smell, so that at the end of a demonstration the generator must either be taken into the open air so that the residual gas may escape, or the light must be left burning until the whole of the gas produced has been exhausted, as it is not very easy to calculate the exact amount of carbide required for a given quantity of gas. It often happens in practice that gas is produced for a much longer time than the circumstances demand.

The projection of animated pictures has no attendant risk, but a great difficulty in connection with it is to avoid the jerkyness involved in bringing the successive images on the film into position in the lantern, for the long band which normally contains some 12,000 impressions is not merely rolled in front

of the lens at a given speed, because if that were the case the impression produced on the eye would be simply one of continuous movement without any detail being visible. What has to be accomplished is this, that while the next image on the film is being brought into position there must be a momentary cutting off of the light by some shutter arrangement. Herein lies the difficulty, for the film has to be started and stopped while all the time its position is accurately adjusted no less than 12,000 times for an average complete representation. So it will be easily seen that the most perfect apparatus necessarily produces a certain amount of jerkyness in the picture on the screen. To obviate this defect then is the aim of all experimenters in this direction. Even with this imperfection, however, the kinematograph or animated photograph projector is a fine invention, and is delighting thousands of people every day. As yet, too, the films are expensive. An unexposed one costs one guinea, and one with pictures on it ready for use about £4 or £5. There is a fine field for the photographer who can take the sort of pictures required, and a similar apparatus is used in connection with the camera for taking the pictures as that for displaying them. The principal subjects at present are views of streets, railway stations, skirt dancers, acrobats, and so on. Perhaps the most effective is the railway station which is seen comparatively empty to begin with, but gradually signs of life present themselves, and people begin to sprinkle in as though expecting the arrival of a train. Then the porters place themselves in readiness, and one can almost imagine the announcing bell is ringing. In the distance steam is seen. the train gradually approaches, rushes into the station and comes to a standstill. People alight from the carriages and others get in. The porters close the doors, the guard waves his flag, and the train moves forward as though it were coming out of the picture to crush the observer, disappearing, however, as soon as it reaches the margin of the screen.

The possibilities of photography seem to be extending, and effects or scenes that it would have been regarded as impossible to effectively reproduce a few years ago, are being portrayed now with marvellous success A photographer at Rouen has succeeded in photographing the Dome and Facade of the Exhibition there, at night, with great success, by means of the electric light in the grounds. Some other successful photographs have been taken recently, representing London by night. The time chosen was any time after dusk until late in the evening, and for those taken later on very long exposures were needed, in some cases an hour. MATTHEW SURFACE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY.

Annual Meeting, held at the Masonic Hall, Mount Road.

Friday, January 8th, 1897.

Mr. F. Dunsterville, President, *in the chair.*

In the absence of the Honorary Secretary, Surgeon-Major VanGeyzel read the Committee's report and financial statements :—

Annual Report for 1895-96.

The Committee begs to present the Annual Report upon the work of the Society for the past year, the ninth year of its existence.

Twenty-three new members joined during the year, and ten resigned, leaving one hundred and four members on the list at its close. The continued increase in the membership roll is a pleasing feature of the past year's progress.

The balance to the Society's credit at the close of the year is Rs. 807-2-6 against Rs. 719-2-11 on 1st January.

From the statement of Journal accounts it appears that the Journal has cost the Society Rs. 510-4-8; but against this sum should be set off about Rs. 110 still outstanding on account of advertisements and about Rs. 310 received by enhancement of subscription rates and included under "Entrance Donation and Annual Subscription." If this is done, and Rs. 42 paid Oakes & Co. for the previous year's journal is excluded, the cost to the Society of the Journal for the past year is only Rs. 48.

The usual monthly meetings were held regularly throughout the year, and a satisfactory feature of the work done is the more extended use which members have made of the question box; there was greater use made of the opportunities of bringing or sending work for criticism and information; new materials and apparatus were also shown and their working explained, and in these ways the Society has accomplished much useful work during the year. In addition to these, the following instructive demonstrations were given at various meetings :—*Flash-light Photography,* and *Development*, by Mr. Ellison; *Photography in Natural Colors,* by Mr. R. Ll. Jones; *X Rays*, by Mr. R. Ll. Jones and Dr. VanGeyzel; *the Photo-Heliograph,* by Mr. Michie Smith; *Cold Bath Platinotype Printing,* by Dr. VanGeyzel; *A Lantern Slide Exhibition,* by Mr. Dunsterville, and another exhibition of slides contributed by several members.

The monthly picture exhibitions which were well patronised towards the earlier part of the year have latterly been falling off, and it is hoped that the mark system and the award of a medal from this year, will stimulate members to contribute more regularly.

The two half-yearly competitions held during the year have also not been as well patronised as in former years. For the first one there were eleven competitors, and the exhibits were on the whole disappointing; and for the second, the exhibits were better, although the number of exhibitors was smaller.

The Society's Journal has, during the year, received a greater degree of support, although far more assistance might be rendered by members making use of its columns for the purpose of seeking or of imparting information. In addition to minor contributions from others, the following original papers were contributed by members of the Society, and, although the list is a small one, yet for a journal which has only twelve issues in the year the interest shown by the contributors is very encouraging:—(1) *Solar Photography*, (2) *The Care of Lenses*, by Mr. Michie Smith; (1) *Enlarging*, (2) *Stereoscopic Photography*, by Mr. Harley; *X Rays*, by Mr. R. Ll. Jones; *Cyanotype Printing*, by Mr. J. H. Cook; *The Difficulties of the Amateur*, by F. D.; contributions on sundry topics from Veterinary-Colonel W. S. Adams; and a series of *Maxims for the Amateur* by C. S. M.

The Society lost the services of Mr. Ellison as Honorary Secretary owing to his departure from India, and greatly regrets that it is about to lose the services also of Mr. Walker, the present Honorary Secretary, on account of ill-health. The Society's thanks are due to these officers for the keen interest which they have taken in its progress through the past year; and to the Editorial staff who have conducted the Society's Journal.

Mr. R. Ll. Jones proposed and H.H. the Elayah Rajah of Travancore seconded the adoption of the Report and the accounts. The proposal was passed *nem. con.*

A gratuity of Rs. 25 was passed to Mr. Lynn's clerk for assistance rendered during the past year.

NEW MEMBERS.

Surgeon-Major VanGeyzel proposed and Mr. Michie Smith seconded—

Surgeon-Lt.-Col. P. H. Benson;

Mr. H. M. Leslie proposed and Mr. V. G. Lynn seconded—

Mr. W. D. Sawers, and Mr. L. Pitblado,

to be members of the Society, and they were duly elected.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The following officers were unanimously elected for the ensuing year:—

Patrons.

H. E. Sir Arthur Ellibank Havelock, G.C M.G, G.C I.E.
The Hon. The Maharajah of Vizianagaram, G.C.I.E.

President.	*Vice-Presidents.*
F. Dunsterville, Esq.	C. Michie Smith, Esq.
	Surg-Maj J.L.VanGeyzel.

Committee.

Mrs. McNair.	E. W. Stoney, Esq.
A. E. Lawson, Esq.	R. Ll. Jones. Esq.
C. E. Phipps, Esq.	W. H. Oakes, Esq.
Honorary Secretary.	*Honorary Treasurer.*
J. L. Walker, Esq.	V. G. Lynn, Esq.

It was decided to invite Mr. J. W. Chambers to accept the office of Honorary Secretary when Mr. Walker leaves Madras.

H.H. The Elayah Rajah of Travancore proposed and Mr. W. H. Oakes seconded a vote of thanks to the office bearers of last year and this was unaminously carried.

THE PICTURE SUBJECT

for the monthly competition in March was selected to be "AN INTERIOR," that for the next competition in February being "EVENING."

Statement of Accounts for the year 1896.

Dr. *The Honorary Treasurer in account current with Amateur Photographic Society of Madras.* **Cr.**

1896.			RS.	A.	P.
January	1	To Balance as per last Statement ...	719	2	11
		„ Entrance Donations and Annual Subscriptions	1,381	9	0
		Total Rs ..	2,100	11	11
1897. January	1	To Balance:— With Messrs. Best & Co. at credit of Society ... 753-3-9; With Messrs. Graves, Cookson & Co. ... 53-14-9	807-2-6		

1896			RS.	A.	P.
Dec.	31	By Printing, Postage and Petties ..	163	2	6
		„ Rent and Establishment ...	63	0	0
		„ Journal as per Statement ...	510	4	8
		„ Sundry Subscriptions to:— Traill Taylor Memorial Fund £2-2-0 at 1/2½ Rs. 34-12-1; Royal Photo. Society £1-1-0 at 1/3$\frac{5}{16}$ ...Rs. 16-9-6	51	5	7
		„ Cost of Lantern Exbitition ...	367	7	6
		„ Sundry Apparatus and Materials	5	12	0
		„ Half-yearly Competition Charges, &c.	132	9	2
		„ Balance	807	2	6
		Total Rs...	2,100	11	11

MADRAS, 7th January 1897.

Examined and found correct.

F. M. ROBINSON, *Honorary Auditor.*

V. G. LYNN, *Honorary Treasurer.*

Statement of Journal Accounts.

RECEIPTS.	RS.	A.	P.
To Subscription to Journal	16	8	0
„ Amounts received for Advertisements ... ... Rs. 461-8-0.			
„ Less Commission on above paid Graves, Cookson & Co ... ... „ 115-6-0			
	346	2	0
„ Balance	510	4	8
Total Rs...	872	14	8

DISBURSEMENTS.	RS.	A.	P.
By Messrs. Oakes & Co.'s bill for balance due them on account of Journal cost to 31st Dec. 1895.	42	11	6
„ Messrs. Graves Cookson & Co. for printing and circulating Journal, &c.	567	2	0
„ Preparation and reproduction of pictures ...	175	15	3
„ Matthew Surface for London Letter— £3- 7-6 at *Ex.* 1/2 Rs. 57-13-8; „ 1-17-6 „ „ 1/3⅜ „ 29- 4-3	87	1	11
Total Rs...	872	14	8

Madras, 7th January 1897.

Examined and found correct.

F. M. ROBINSON, *Honorary Auditor.*

V. G. LYNN, *Honorary Treasurer.*

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Proceedings of a Committee Meeting held on the 8th January 1897.

Mr. F. Dunsterville, President, *in the chair.*

Present—Messrs. C. Michie Smith, E. W. Stoney, C E Phipps, V. G. Lynn, Mrs. McNair, and Dr. VanGeyzel

(1) The Annual Report and the Financial Statements were discussed and passed for presentation at the General Meeting.

(2) It was proposed that the financial year of the Society should in future begin on 1st January and end on 31st December, instead of on 1st December and 1st November as at present.

Notice is accordingly given to members that a proposal to alter the date mentioned in Rule 12 of the Society's Rules will be brought forward at the next meeting

(3) The Society's rules for competitions were gone over and revised. They are published in their new form on the last page of the Journal.

(4) The Honorary Treasurer laid upon the table a list of members whose subscriptions were in arrears at the 31st December last. Resolved that those members whose subscriptions were overdue for more than one year be informed that, unless all arrears are paid by the end of the current month, their names will be removed from the list of members.

(5) The subject for the next special competition in June was selected to be *"An Architectural Study."*

(6) The following were elected to be the Judges at the competition for the ensuing year :—

Mr. F. Dunsterville.
Mr. C. Michie Smith
Surgeon-Major J. L. VanGeyzel.

Mr. E. W. Stoney to act as extra Judge under Rule 10, in cases where any of the above Judges enters as a competitor

EXTRACTS.

Composition.

By G. Davison.

Amongst photographers the word composition is used with a variety of meanings. In its most common application it is made to refer solely to the arrangement of the main lines and the boundaries of a photograph. This is a mistaken restriction. We constantly hear it said that the composition of such and such a picture is unpleasant because it requires more off the foreground or because a roadway or river-course is travelling out of the picture. This may be all very well as far as it goes, but it is elementary and incomplete, and in such criticism one is generally aware that the observation and knowledge goes no further.

Composition is not only a matter of the placing together of lines or outline boundaries and of masses of light and dark in a space, but it also concerns the entire disposition of objects to tell a story or describe a scene. In graphic representation it is personal selection in every particular of arrangement of line and light, of relative definition, relative tone, and of expression—figure of man or face of nature—and it involves, all through the artificial or personal combination, the keeping of the main motive, the sentiment of the subject uppermost in the illusion.

Such works, to deserve the name of compositions, must have a motive personal to the author, and some feeling. Photographs are frequently presented for criticism about which it is simply impossible to say anything from an æsthetic point of view except that they are not composition at all. There is no subject in them, no pictorial conception, no imagination or sentiment, no decorative aim or knowledge, no emotion stirred, no particulor reason for anything—they are simply lists of objects, mere mechanical transcripts.

The difference between such a representation and a good picture is the difference between a catalogue and a telling story with subtle analysis of character, or between a newspaper record and a fine prose composition or poem. The catalogue has its useful place but ought not to be presented for criticism as classic literature.

It may be true that some element of composition must enter into the production of every representation however limited the thought. For it is almost impossible that any worker can learn to employ a means of picturing without gathering a few ideas concerning subjects to be selected and the best way of showing those subjects. In these matters the question of degree must always be very prominent.

The photographer is in the peculiar position of having placed in his hands the power of making very complete representations without necessarily having to think and select. He does not start with the simplest of objects, studying its form under varying conditions of light and shade and comparing the graphic result with

his mental impression. It would be better if he did. He generally pursues from the outset a course of complicated subjects, accepting what his procedure gives him too much without criticism or attempt at modification. His tendency is to forget more than half of what is involved in composition and to fall into slavery to his tools.

As a matter of fact manual skill is of little use unless the worker has something worthy the telling. Such a state of things is craft without art. When a practitioner in any art craft has acquired his proper technique and knows the use of his tools and what they will do for him there still remains the important part of how, when and where he shall apply his dexterity. What shall he select or conventionalize? How shall he give expression to his own impressions of human form human character and relations, or of nature's appearances and moods.

His practical answer to this enquiry is the artist's composition. He picks out and places together statements or suggestions of those facts which his own observation, feeling and analysis induce him to select. The education which leads to his selection is the education of his life, the moulding of his surroundings, natural and artificial.

The way in which he orders this technique, observation and feeling to tell a story, fill a space, design a pattern, describe a person, scene, incident or effect is composition. And in this view it will be promptly evident that it would be absurd to seek to deduce any absolute rules of arrangement or to give the particular practice of any artist or artists the prominence of laws.

This remark holds with regard to classes of art which must be frankly graphic and simulative, such as landscape and portraiture, even more strongly than it does to the purely suggestive conventional and decorative ,sections. But even in the department of applied decoration there are no possible rules for ordering subtle and convincing suggestion by means of a limited technique of lines and unmodelled masses of shade. Every successful design has its charm in its surprise, in its simplicity and fitness, the result of complex thought and a power of abstraction and refinement that defies classification.

To crystallize the methods of any man or school in the form of rules for guidance does more harm than good. It may be possible that in time some small scientific base may be agreed upon to connect the sense of pleasure with certain line and colour compositions, but that time is not yet, and, where the number of circumstances to be used decoratively and the proportions of shapes to be filled are infinite, pleasure must wait solely on fitness and fitness upon a thousand thoughts and feelings.

Some time back a statement was made in the photographic papers that there could be no composition in photography, only selection. The remark was made in a discussion and was reported without any context, so that it is not easy to criticise the position taken up by the speaker. Without his definition of the word it may be fighting in the dark to take exception to the attitude. At the same time it is difficult to see how any reasonable meaning whatever can be put upon the word which shall altogether exclude photography. It is true a definition might be constructed which would limit the possibility in photography somewhat narrowly. Some persons for instance have the feeling that nothing is really worthy the name of composition without colour scheme and harmony.

But leaving the large and increasing world of black and white art as its own justification as a whole, how can photography be specially excluded from this group? Take an extreme case. Let it be supposed that the word composition implies a new ordering and arrangement of facts or impressions gained from a variety of experience, and upon different occasions, in other words a combination of several sketches or memories. This will be no impassable barrier. The degree to which it is actually practised does not affect the principle. Combination photography has given results fully equal in essentials to the domestic genre pictures of the painters' galleries, and a photographer may in a wide range of subjects bring together properties and apply lighting in harmony with previous experiences, thought or fancy.

To say that the impression in the photographic print is not the impressions of the mind is a doubly assailable position. Some find that the impression *are* alike, and at least it is a matter for personal opinion. If the operator consciously affects in any degree the qualities of his final print in respect of line arrangement, light and shade, and cloud harmony, to mention a few points only, it must be so far his composition.

It becomes a nicer question when the discussion turns upon the local selection and simplification possible and practised throughout very minute passages of artistic work. But this again is a matter of degree. Composition and selection cannot be restricted to a point of practice, which after all, when practically tested, is found to consist chiefly in generalization.

The contention however that there can be no composition in photography hardly seems worth serious discussion. The word composition will not bear the strained interpretations we have put upon it for the sake of argument. It refers to the whole work and to every part of the work, to selection of instance and point of view, to control in exposure, focussing, development and printing, to ordering the background to the figure, to posing and lighting for character and arrangement of line and mass, to sympathetic calling up and seizing of expression, in short to every thought and act all through in the production of the illusion which we call the picture.

Any hard and fast distinction between selection and composition in art work is an impossibility. Both involve ordering and arrangement of parts. Whether the selection and composition be set down by brush and pencil or by lens and printing does not affect the principle. The camera could not do it without the man and no two men could or would independently produce the same composition.

If further evidence were needed, let ocular proof carry some weight. Compare, under circumstances as nearly similar as may be, half-tone reproductions of good landscape pictures which have been produced by painting and by photography. There have been many examples of half-tone prints before us in the picture magazines. Take the instance of work by such a good painter as Mr. Alfred East. Its similarity in its reproduced dress to what we are accustomed to in good photographs is quite convincing. Hardly anyone will deny the presence of composition in the print from the painting. And in the photograph will be found something of all the qualities that go to make the print a composition. Why, then, strain to make distinctions which practical results will not warrant?

In a composition there may be a pleasure in the subject, a pleasure in the effective way in which the artist has seized the sentiment of nature, that is, has presented our own unwritten or undefined feelings about the subject, and a pleasure in what may be called the decorative message of the picture.

The pleasure in subject may be quite distinct from any conscious æsthetic consideration, as in many popular pictures of the story-telling class. But even in such cases there is plenty of scope for arrangement and there may even be said to be a special kind or quality of composition required to produce the particular excitement for which the patrons of this order of pictures crave.

In every class of work it is difficult to separate the various feelings of pleasure. In the finest works the manner is intimately part of the matter and the proportions and decorative harmony are essential to the whole effect. No picture can be a very perfect work unless it speaks in all three voices as one. If the subject matter be trivial only a trivial manner can save it from incongruity. Whether in portraiture or landscape one finds it difficult to deny the importance of a distinguished and characteristic instance. This is seen plainly in the general agreement to admire the picturesque type, the furrowed features and white locks of age or the charm of feminine youth and beauty even when the treatment is commonplace and out of keeping. In portraiture and landscape the beauty of the work of art is in the character and in the force of its statement, complete and harmonious within its boundaries, wearing its limitations as it were a perfect freedom, like finely ordered music.

The beauty and distinction of instance need not however be judged by a popular standard of prettiness. In a portrait picture it matters not if a man be ugly as the world counts ugliness. The chief feeling of æsthetic pleasure lies in the powerful and expressive rendering of strong typical character. It is indeed quite consistent with aversion for the disposition or conduct pourtrayed. Tragedy and comedy may alike be pleasing, each calling for its appropriate key, phrasing and touch throughout, for, in short, a composition suitable to the theme.

In landscape and in all work where the idea of graphic representation is uppermost the first and foremost quality must be that of natural sentiment. Whether it be the feeling of figures seen through lacing branches, the movement of waters with reflections or of wind upon grasses, the suggestion of evening calm or noontide brilliancy, or the expression of character in portraiture, the

keenest pleasure comes from the subtlety and perfection of the illusion. Not, be it understood, necessarily perfection or completeness of the details of the objects in the representation, but rather convincing expression of the general feeling of that particular phase of nature or personal character which has been made the motive of the picture.

Whilst however insisting on this quality of naturalness of sentiment as of greatest importance in graphic pictures we have no intention or desire to minimize the importance of the decorative arrangement Every good picture must be decorative as well as graphically representative. Indeed in the best examples, as already stated, the two parts are inseparably united and merged. There is a reason in the subject motive itself or in the effective concentration of interest upon it for the disposition of every part in the space filled. The subject must dictate the space design.—*The Practical Photographer.*

Proofs Quickly after Exposure.

By W. K. B.

When the gelatino-bromide process first began to become popular, one of the drawbacks most felt was the length of time that had to elapse between the exposure of a plate and the time when a negative could be handed over to the retoucher or the printer. At the present day, we hear much less about this disadvantage, because for one thing, means of considerably lessening the time have been discovered, and for another, a great proportion of the body of photographers of the present day have not worked the wet collodion process, and do not know the delights of the rapid development and re-development of the almost instantaneous fixing with cyanide, the mere rinsing that was necessary to remove the residue of this salt from the thin porous film, the drying in a few seconds before a fire or over a lamp or gas flame, and the varnishing *with the same " heat"*; when "there you were!" We do not remember to have seen recorded the very shortest time in which all these operations have been performed, but a very few minutes was (and, of course, still is when the progress is still worked) ample in skilled hands.

Now this is far from the case with the modern dry plate. Quick developers we have, and much has been done to shorten the time of washing and drying, but the time of fixing remains practically the same *to be thorough*, and neither washing nor drying can ever be reduced to a very short process.

There is, however, a way of getting a proof without fixing or even drying, whereby the sitter may see a print " while he waits, " which may not be known to all your readers, though it has been published, and is, we believe, a method actually practised in some photo-mechanical establishments. No details have been given in the publication referred to, so we give here the exact method that we have employed.

A negative is developed in the usual way, is rinsed, and is placed for a couple of minutes or so in a strong solution of bromide of potassium, or ammonium slightly acidified.

The exact strength of this solution, either as regards bromide or acid, does not matter. A five per cent. solution of bromide, to each ounce of which five minims of hydrochloric acid have been added, is suitable if it do not cause frilling. If it do, the quantity of acid must be reduced.

The object of this bath is to render the unaltered bromide insensitive to the light of the exposure which is now to be given *before* fixing. Bromide of silver in gelatine, in the absence of a developer, turns colour but little in the presence of light, and the slight deposit that does result is nearly entirely removed by the hypo bath, but it is quite otherwise in the case of a film that retains even a very little developer. It is highly sensitive to light, and, for reasons that it would take too long to enter into here, if the film be an unfixed negative, exposed to light from the back, the deposit takes place chiefly in the shadows, where it does the maximum of harm. To entirely wash out the developer from a gelatino-bromide film is a long process. The acid bromide solution neutralises the activity of the developer in a very short time, and there is no necessity to remove it very completely before the next process, though a fairly thorough washing should be given.

The plate is placed in a dish of clean water, face upwards; a piece of bromide paper is brought into contract with it; after thorough soaking, the back of the paper is squeezed, to ensure contact, and an exposure is given in a common printing, to a gas or other convenient light. Of course, this exposure must be longer than in the case of a fixed plate, and different plates vary very much in respect of the length of the time necessary. Some need only three or four times as long as they would need after fixing, others ten times as long, or even more. It is not difficult to judge, however, as, after a few minutes of the acid bromide solution, the negative may be examined by strong artificial light without danger to it.

The bromide paper is developed in the usual way, one or two precautions only being necessary. If the negative have been developed with pyro (or probably with any other alkaline developer), the print should also be developed with an alkaline developer—of which there are several suitable,—to prevent the inky stain that might result from the mixture of a trace of pyro, communicated from the negative to the bromide paper, and an iron developer.

The bromide paper must be thoroughly soaked before it is brought into contact with the negative, otherwise it is liable to adhere in the most obstinate way, on account of the swelling of the gelatine, an action taken advantage of to produce adhesion in the case of carbon paper. In fact, it is as well to set the bromide paper to soak before development of the negative is begun.

In this way it is possible to get a proof from a gelatino-bromide dry plate in a shorter time after exposure than an untoned proof on albumenised paper could be got from a wet-plate negative.

As to getting a gelatino-bromide negative as rapidly as possible into condition for printing in the ordinary way, most of our readers probably well know the various means of shortening the time taken for the different processes, but there can be no harm in recapitulating them.

In the first place, it should be noted that plates differ very much in the length of time needed (other things being equal) to produce a thoroughly washed and dried negative. The thickness of the film has more to do with the property of quick or slow drying than anything else, a thick film taking naturally longer to dry than a thin, but the quantity of gelatine present has much more to do with the time taken in drying than the quantity of bromide of silver, so that it will not do to assume that, because a film is thin and dries quickly, it is therefore poor in silver. Absorbing power of the gelatine is also a factor, though it is liable to act in two ways, a plate that absorbs water readily going through some processes more quickly than one that does not, others more slowly.

Temperature of washing water and of solutions is another matter that affects the time taken for all processes. A temperature of 70° Fahr. is somewhat too high for the developer in the case of some plates, tending to produce fog, but not for many, and we know of no plates that will not stand this temperature, for all other liquids used, whilst most will stand a good deal more. If reduction of time is a first desideratum, all liquids used after the developer should be as warm as is permissible without danger of causing frilling, melting, or unduly softening the film. Temperature has, perhaps, more hastening effect in the case of the fixing-bath than of any other liquid used.

The fixing-bath should be a solution of hypo, of strength twenty-five per cent., not much less or more, and should be renewed before it is very old.

The quickest method of washing we believe to be from a rose sprinkler, the form such that the water is ejected on to the whole surface of the plate, the pressure such that it impinges with some force. We believe that with such a jet and water at a temperature of not less than 7 ° Fahr., hypo will in all cases be completely eliminated in ten minutes. We have not such faith in so-called " hypo-eliminators "—except in good water plentifully used.

The plate thoroughly washed should be blotted off, should be flowed on the surface several times with methylated spirits, and should then be *covered in a dish for ten minutes with methylated spirits at a temperature of not less than 70° Fahr.* This comparatively long time is not wasted, as it enables the rest of the drying to be done in two or three minutes, so much water being extracted by the alcohol that heat may be applied pretty freely without danger of melting the film.

The object of the preliminary flowing with spirit is that no more water than need be is carried into the bulk of spirit in the dish, which may thus be used for many plates, and, when it begins to get too watery, as indicated by the plates taking too long to dry after removal from it, may still be used for preliminary flowing.

A plate taken from the spirit-bath is blotted off, and is held in front of the fire (or placed in sunshine in a country where sunshine is capable of warming anything), and the film side is vigorously fanned. If everything has been done rightly, the film should be dry in from one to five minutes.

By following the methods here described we have, using a suitable brand of plate, had a negative ready for the printing-frame in not much more than thirty minutes—well under forty minutes—and this, we believe, a negative that had been thoroughly fixed, and from which the hypo had been thoroughly eliminated.—*Photography.*

19422

COMPETITIONS.

(Open only to members of the Society.)

Subject for Special Competition in May:—*An Architectural Study.*

Subject for Monthly Competitions in { Feby. *Evening.* Mar. *An Interior.* }

RULES.

1. Two Special Competitions shall be held, in each year, in addition to a monthly competition.

2. The Committee shall select the subjects for the Special Competitions, and notice of the selected subjects shall be announced in the Society's Journal in February and in July of each year. The subject for each monthly competitions shall be selected two months in advance by the members present at the monthly meeting, and shall be notified in the next issue of the Society's Journal.

3. Pictures, &c., competing for Prizes at the Special Competitions must reach the Secretary by the last day of January and of May, and those competing at the monthly competitions must arrive in time to be shown at the monthly meeting.

4, Prizes will consist of Silver and of Bronze Medals, and of Certificates of Merit.

5. Not more than one Silver and one Bronze Medal shall be given at each Special Competition, and one Silver and one Bronze Medal may also be given at these competitions for excellence in copying, enlarging, lantern slides, or any other special branch of photography. One Silver and one Bronze Medal shall be awarded half-yearly to the exhibitors who obtain the highest and the next highest marks respectively at the monthly competitions. The number of Certificates of Merit granted at each competition is left to the discretion of the Judges.

6. A member may receive only one Silver and one Bronze Medal in the special, and one Silver and one Bronze Medal in the monthly competitions, held during the same year; but should a member who has been adjudged a medal be disqualified under this rule from receiving it, he shall be given a Special Certificate instead, marked 1st or 2nd Prize.

7. A Special Committee of three members shall be appointed Judges by the General Committee to carry out, subject to these Rules, all arrangements connected with the competitions.

8. The Special Committee shall be appointed after the Annual General Meeting in January, and shall hold office for one year, and any vacancy occurring will be filled up by the General Committee.

9. The Special Committee shall decide upon the merits of the pictures, &c., sent in for competition, and their decision shall be final. The system of judging the monthly exhibits shall be by awarding marks, a record of which shall be kept by the Judges, the marks being totalled and the results declared half-yearly. For this purpose, only the highest mark awarded at each competition to a single exhibit of each competitor shall be recorded, but not the aggregate marks gained by each for a number of exhibits.

10. If any member of the Special Committee is a competitor, the General Committee shall appoint a non-competing member to act as Judge at that competition instead of the competing member.

11. No exhibit thall compete twice, but pictures, &c., already exhibited elsewhere, may be sent in for the competitions.

12. Lantern slides sent in for competition shall be in sets of six, and shall be judged upon the screen.

13. The Special Committee shall not award any Prizes or Certificates, unless they consider the exhibits to be worthy of such distinction.

14. Each competing exhibit shall be the entire work of the exhibitor, and when sent in shall be accompanied by a Certificate in the annexed form. :—

> "The (1) Arranging, (2) Exposing, (3) Developing, (4) Retouching (if any), (5) Printing and (6) Trimming and Mounting were done by me without assistance."
>
> ____________________
>
> *Member, A. P. Socy. of Madras.*

15. All pictures for the Special Competitions shall be mounted, and may at the competitor's option be framed but not glazed. Those for the monthly competitions need not be mounted, but should be trimmed.

16. Each competing picture should have a name or title, which should indicate the nature of the subject.

17. No competitor shall be allowed to send in more than six pictures to compete for any particular Prize, but the same member may compete in all branches specified in Rule 5.

18. The pictures gaining 1st and 2nd Prizes at the half-yearly competitions, and the best pictures sent for the monthly competitions, shall, when practicable, be reproduced in the Society's Journal.

19. To give up-country members an opportunity of seeing the competing pictures at the Special Competitions, the pictures shall be circulated to all members of the Society, not residing in Madras, who apply to see them. As this arrangement can only be carried out by the cordial co-operation of the members themselves, they are expected to forward the pictures *without delay* to the next member, and to send one of the accompanying post-cards to the Secretary, so that by this means the progress of the pictures may be traced.

SALE AND EXCHANGE.

For Sale—Frena, No. 2, Hand Camera, with two packets of films, 3 xylonite dishes, plate washing rack, folding bamboo tripod stand, and book of instructions. The Camera is practically new, having been used only four or five times. Cost the owner Rs. 200. Offers received by Surgeon-Major VanGeyzel, Chetput, Madras.

For Sale—A Quarter-Plate Camera by Lancaster & Sons., The Instantograph, leather bellows, rack work front, swing back. No lens or tripod. One dark slide. Unused, just out from England. Price Rs. 25.

To be seen at the Photographic Stores, Mount Road, Madras.

For Sale—An Ilford Exposure Meter, as good as new. Apply to Surgeon-Major VanGeyzel, Chetput, Madras.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REQUISITES.

Dry Plates.

Ilford

		$4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$		5×4	$6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$	$8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$	10×8	12×10	
Ordinary / Empress / Red Label	As.	**14**	Rs.	**1-7**	**2-0**	**3-14**	**6-10**	**9-10**	per doz.

Wratten & Wainwright

		$4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$	5×4	$6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$	$8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$	10×8	12×10	
Ordinary / Instantaneous	Rs.	**1-5**	**2-0**	**2-14**	**5-4**	**8-0**	**12-12**	per doz.
Drop-shutter	,,	**1-9**	**2-8**	**3-9**	**6-10**	**9-10**	**15-10**	,,

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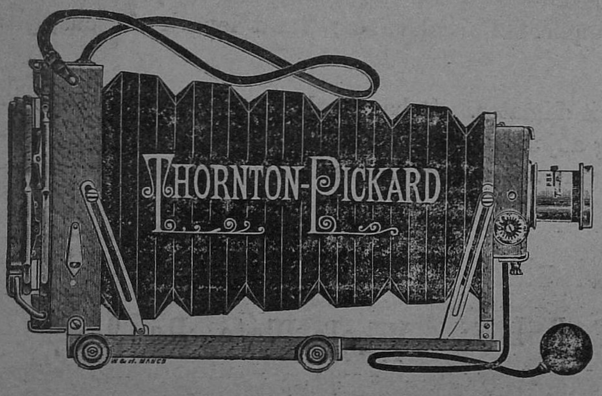

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